

The
**THOREAU
SOCIETY
BULLETIN**

BULLETIN FIFTY

WINTER, 1955

REFLECTIONS ON THE FIFTIETH BULLETIN

The publication of our fiftieth bulletin calls for some special kind of observance. Printing it in gold ink or striking off a gold medal for distribution to our members is not within the reach of our not-very-golden treasury, so I shall take the liberty of remarking it with some not-very-golden words--a few reminiscences on the founding of the bulletin and its publication.

In the winter of 1940, I was teaching school in a rather isolated community in western Massachusetts. Having few library facilities at hand, and wishing to embark on a study of Thoreau, I started corresponding with everyone I could learn of who was interested in Thoreau, asking if there were no organization for the mutual exchange of information. The replies were uniform: there was no such organization. It would be nice, but there were not sufficient people interested. In all the correspondence, there was only one ray of hope. Rev. Roland D. Sawyer of Ware, Mass., replied that he had long wanted to organize an annual pilgrimage to Walden Pond on Thoreau's birthday, and that if I would help him arrange a pilgrimage, perhaps it could be used to organize a society. Together we wrote to Mr. Allen French of Concord, asking if anyone there would help sponsor the pilgrimage. Mr. French replied by organizing a Concord committee of sponsors. We then turned to Prof. Raymond Adams of the University of North Carolina, who turned over to us the mailing list for the "Thoreau Newsletter" which he had issued from time to time. July 12, 1941 was set as the first meeting date; the mailing list was circularized, and publicity was sent out to the newspapers. A few days before the meeting, a member of the Concord committee wrote that only ten or fifteen people had sent in luncheon reservations and suggested that we call the whole thing off. But we decided to go ahead for better or for worse.

July 12, 1941 was a miserable, rainy day. I arrived at Walden Pond, the scheduled meeting place, to find only one forlorn, soaked-through-to-the-skin boy scout in sight. He announced that the meeting place had been moved to the D.A.R. hall in town. There, to my complete amazement, I found the hall literally bursting at the seams. Every seat was taken and people were sitting on the floor and the window ledges. More than one hundred people were present.

The upshot of it all was that it was immediately resolved to form a society. Raymond Adams was chosen president (an office which he has held ever since);

Dr. Fred S. Piper, vice-president (he resigned a year or two later and was replaced by Mrs. Caleb Wheeler); and I was chosen secretary. In the fall of 1941, I was a graduate student under Prof. Adams at Chapel Hill, and there we issued the first bulletin, a two-page mimeographed affair. The next year I was given a leave-of-absence and T. Morris Longstreth was elected acting secretary while I served in Civilian Public Service. The mimeographed bulletin appeared at varying intervals, issued sometimes by Prof. Adams, occasionally by me, and once by Daniel Bernstein. In July, 1944, I returned to the secretaryship. In January, 1945, we changed over to photo-offset printing and the bulletin has appeared regularly every quarter ever since.

I wish there were time and space to narrate my adventures as secretary at length. But I shall have to content myself with a few details. I've often wondered how many noticed that one of the bulletins was printed with the wrong date. It went to press in December for publication in January, and I had dated it for the preceding year. Very few copies were mailed out before I noticed the date and corrected the error by hand. So I suppose the few uncorrected copies are a rarity of a kind. On another occasion, I mailed out a whole group of empty envelopes, having inadvertently stuffed the wrong pile in the mailbox. Fortunately the envelopes were alphabetized and I was able to follow up the empty envelopes with full ones. I shudder when I look back over Bulletin 30 and discover I described John Dewey as a "nonegarian" and wonder if anyone realized I meant "nonagenarian." I am amused at the frequent letters I get from school children writing term papers, asking me to send them "everything about Henry Thoreau." I am amazed when occasionally letters addressed to "Henry D. Thoreau, Concord, Mass." get forwarded to me--just as I was flabbergasted when a letter addressed to me as "Secretary of the Thoreau Society, Bridgewater, Conn." (a town I've never been in, though I grew up in Bridge-water, Mass.) reached me in Lenox, Mass., where I was visiting at the time.

But most of all I delight in the fourteen years of fun in publishing the bulletin, attending the meetings, and corresponding and meeting with you Thoreau enthusiasts all over the country--and indeed all over the world. And I am eternally grateful to you who have continued to offer your encouragement and help in the work.

Walter Harding

THE FRANCIS H. ALLEN PAPERS IN THE THOREAU SOCIETY ARCHIVES: A CATALOG: SUPPLEMENT WH

Members of the Thoreau Society will recall that several years ago, Francis H. Allen, the distinguished editor of Thoreau's Journals and many other volumes pertaining to Thoreau, gave a large collection of his personal papers to the society. Now since his death in 1953, his daughter, Mrs. William Thompson, of Cambridge, Mass., has contributed further Thoreau materials from his papers to the society. These are listed below and will be placed in the file in the society's

archives in the Concord Free Public Library, where they will be available to scholars.

Letters to Francis H. Allen:

Adams, Raymond. 5 letters.
Brown, William T. 1 letter (Brown was Theo Brown's son and he speaks briefly of meeting Thoreau and of the difficulty of attracting audiences to Thoreau's lectures in Worcester.)
Brooks, Van Wyck. 2 letters.
Canby, Henry S. 7 letters.
Chamberlain, Allen. 1 letter.
Chamberlin, J. E. 1 letter.
Colcord, Lincoln. 1 letter.
Cook, Reginald L. 2 letters.
Cooley, John L. 4 letters.
Davidson, Jo. 1 letter (on Davidson's proposed statue of Thoreau).
Fabulet, Louis. 33 letters. (chiefly queries on difficulties he was having in translating WALDEN into French).
French, Allen. 3 letters.
Greene, Belle da C. 1 letter.
Gregory, Russell. 2 letters.
Gleason, Herbert. 1 letter.
Harding, Walter. 6 letters.
Haydon, W. T. 3 letters.
Hickok, Benjamin B. 1 letter.
Hill, E. B. 2 letters.
Hosmer, Jane. 6 letters. (On Mrs. LeBrun, a friend of the Thoreau family. "The Rowse crayon... brings up to me the Mr. Thoreau of my childhood and youth." "Mr. Thoreau always spoke of his house, not hut or cabin." "I do not remember John Thoreau but, as he was a great favorite in Concord, he was long mourned and much talked of here during my childhood. It was thought that Henry would not long survive his loss and his friends feeling that a change was imperative he was induced to go to Staten Island to teach Mr. Wm. Emerson's eldest son.")
Jones, Samuel A. 1 letter.
Kendall, W. C. 2 letters. (On the fish of Walden Pond).
Kane, Henry B. 2 letters.
Kramer, Sidney. 5 letters.
Lee, G. Winthrop. 2 letters.
Lee, Harry. 2 letters.
Leisy, E. E. 2 letters.
Lincoln, Alexander, Jr. 1 letter.
Lockley, R. M. 1 letter.
Lunt, Dudley. 7 letters.
Lynch, F. P. 1 letter.
Perry, Bliss. 1 letter.
Ricketson, Walton. 2 letters. (Thoreau "was so severely afflicted with a bronchial cough on his last visit to Brooklawn (Aug. 1861) that he desired to lodge in an upper room as he feared he might disturb the family by his coughing.")
Rusk, Ralph L. 1 letter.
Russell, E. H. 1 letter.
Salt, Henry S. 2 letters.
Seybold, Ethel. 1 letter.
Shepard, Odell. 1 letter.
Thatcher, George T. 1 letter.
Thomas, W. Stephen. 2 letters.
Torrey, Bradford. 7 letters. (Chiefly on Thoreau's ornithology).
Wakeman, Stephen H. 3 letters. (About the unpublished Thoreau journals in Mr. Wakeman's possession. Laid in are two evaluations of Mr. Wakeman's unpublished Thoreau manuscripts made by Allen for the Houghton Mifflin Co.)

Wheeler, Ruth K. 1 letter.
Whicher, George F. 2 letters.
White, Viola C. 4 letters.
Whitford, Kathryn. 1 letter.
Wyeth, N. C. 3 letters. (on illustrating Thoreau).

Reviews of the 1951 printing of Thoreau's JOURNALS:

TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT, April 18, 1952; NEW YORK TIMES, May 20, 1951; NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, May 20, 1951; WASHINGTON POST, June 17, 1951; AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Autumn (1951?); NEW YORKER, Dec. 29, 1951; WORCESTER (Mass.) TELEGRAM, Aug. 27, 1951; NEW REPUBLIC, May 7, 1951; CHICAGO TRIBUNE, April 8, 1951; NASHVILLE BANNER, March 23, 1951; SAT. REV. OF LIT., Sept. 22, 1951.

A large collection of clipped reviews of Mr. Allen's NATURE'S DIARY (Houghton Mifflin, 1897), a year-book of quotations from nature writers, chiefly Thoreau.

Four envelopes of clipped page proofs from Thoreau's JOURNALS, entitled "Fishes in Thoreau's Works," "Batrachians," "Invertebrates," and "Reptiles."

The original ms. of Mr. Allen's TSB article on "Thoreau's Translations from Pindar."

A photograph of the site of Thoreau's 1860 camp on Mount Monadnock.

A drawing of Thoreau at his Walden Hut by Andrew Wyeth.

MISCELLANY. . .

The printing of this bulletin has been paid for by the life membership of Mr. K. K. Bechtel of San Francisco, Calif. Life membership is \$25.00

In his new first novel, HANG UP THE FIDDLE (New York: Doubleday, 1954, p.242), Frederic Babcock has one of his characters quote briefly from WALDEN.

Prof. Robert Cosbey, Roosevelt College, 430 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, writes that the sign marking Thoreau Spring on Mount Katahdin in Maine has disappeared. He has volunteered to raise funds to replace the sign if some individual or group will have the sign painted and placed on the spot.

Once again the New York University Hall of Fame will conduct an election of great names to be added to its rolls. Oddly enough Thoreau has never won election. It has been suggested that members of the Thoreau Society conduct a campaign to assure his election this year. Any comments or suggestions? If you wish to write the electors, urging Thoreau's election, you may obtain their names and addresses from Mrs. Bertha L. Lyon, Curator, Hall of Fame, New York University, 53 Washington Square South, New York 12, N.Y.

The M. Kershner Book Shop, 1825 White Plains Road, New York City, 62, has recently offered for sale (at \$100) F. B. Sanborn's own copy of WALDEN (Houghton Mifflin's 1893 edition) corrected and emended to correspond with the original MS. This was the basis for the badly garbled Bibliophile Society edition of WALDEN in 1909.

Jean Shepard, disc jockey on WLW (Cincinnati) frequently quotes from Thoreau on his show.

THE 1955 ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION

The annual meeting of the Thoreau Society will be held in Concord on Saturday, July 9th. More detailed announcement will be contained in the spring bulletin, which will be mailed out in late May or early June. Unfortunately the report of the nominating committee for the 1955 election did not reach our hands in time to be included in this bulletin, but it will be included in the spring bulletin. Members wishing to make nominations to the office of president, vice-president, secretary, or executive committee should write Mr. Ralph Chapman, Cherry St., Brattleboro, Vt.

A PUZZLING QUOTATION BY THOREAU . . . WRH

I am sure that not a year has gone by since I have become secretary of our society that I have not received at least one inquiry as to the source of Thoreau's quotation in "Civil Disobedience":

A drab of state, a cloth-o'-silver slut,
To have her train borne up, and her
soul trail in the dirt.

I have searched and inquired for years myself, but with no luck. But at last, tracing down a clue I found in one of Thoreau's commonplace books, I have found it. It is a slight misquotation of some lines from Act IV, Scene iv of the Elizabethan play The Revengers Tragedie by Cyril Tourneur, published in London in 1608. The first line should read:

A drab of State, a cloath, a silver slut!

ADDITIONS TO THE THOREAU BIBLIOGRAPHY

A., E. "Les Detracteurs de Thoreau." W.H. L'UNIQUE (Orleans, France). Sept. 1954. pp. 177-8.

Adams, Raymond. "A Rap from the Seer of Walden." CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. Oct. 9, 1954. Condensation of the 1954 Thoreau Society presidential address.

American Academy of Arts and Letters. THE GREAT DECADE IN AMERICAN WRITING: 1850-1860: EMERSON: HAWTHORNE: MELVILLE: THOREAU: WHITMAN: BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS: WITH PAINTINGS BY FRIENDS AND CONTEMPORARIES OF THE AUTHORS: (A CATALOG). New York, 1954. 29pp. A detailed catalog of the fine exhibition held for the month of December, 1954.

Anon. "Emerson" in IJIN WA KUKU OSHIERU (THUS GREAT MEN TEACH US). Tokyo: Dai Nippon Yuben Kai Kodan Sha, 1933. pp. 28-30. On Emerson and H.D.T.

Broderick, John C. "Thoreau and MY PRISONS." Boston Public Library Quarterly, VII (Jan. 1955), 48-50. On HDT's interest in Silvio Pellico's book.

Condry, William. "Thoreau in Britain." CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. Oct. 23, 1954. An excerpt from his biography

Cook, Reginald L. "This Side of Walden." ENGLISH LEAFLET, LIII (Dec. 1954), 1-12. One of the most thoughtful of the centenary essays. Copies may be obtained for 50¢ from Miss E. E. Johnson, Brookline High School, Brookline 46, Mass.

Cowell, Henry & Sidney. CHARLES IVES AND HIS MUSIC. New York: Oxford, 1955. 245pp. Many details on Ives' interest in HDT.

Cunningham, Nora B. "Walden." CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. Oct. 16, 1954. A sonnet.

Ducharme, Jacques. "An American Classic." THINK, XX (Nov. 1954), 28. A centennial essay on WALDEN. Copies may be obtained from the editors, % INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES, Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. Free.

F., R. "Gogan Sensei talks on the Zen spirit of Emerson and Thoreau." EIGO SEINEN (THE RISING GENERATION), XLIII (May 15, 1920).

Harding, Walter, ed. THOREAU: A CENTURY OF CRITICISM. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1954. 205pp. \$3.75.

Thoreau, A Century of Criticism, Edited by Walter Harding. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1954. 205pp. \$3.75

Procrustes made a rigid bed, but I never heard that he tried to lie on it. That is a fault of this book. The editor tries to lie in too rigid a bed, tries to conform his material to too neat a form. His problem was a hard one to begin with, for he had to compress into two hundred pages representative criticism of Thoreau from an entire century. But it was not necessary that every Thoreau book and every decade of that century be represented. There may well have been decades of neglect when nothing significant appeared; and there may be books about which nothing truly important was said. So the editor has fenced himself in.

Neither is criticism good because one finds it down some bypath. Yet I feel that Ripley's newspaper review of A Week or the Walden review from the National Slavery Standard, or the essay from The Seven Arts, or others of the sort, are drawn into the book more because they are little known and hard to find than because they are particularly good.

A worse fault is that the editor has maimed his book by excluding selections from books about Thoreau. It would seem that book length studies would contain the solid conclusions of the most thoughtful critics. So they do. And Thoreau criticism is misrepresented if VanDoren and Canby and Cook and Whicher and Krutch are all omitted, while Salt's biography is left out in favor of a one-page 1930 note by Salt about Gandhi. Those Englishmen Salt and Japp all but started Thoreau criticism, and they should not be ignored because they chose to write whole books about Thoreau. The biographer who studies his subject at full length may very likely be the best critic.

I consider Bradford Torrey a more significant critic of Thoreau than the Whitfords. I think John Macy raised a more influential voice for a reconsideration of Thoreau after World War I than Sinclair Lewis did. I think F. O. Matthiessen cannot be omitted from a book of Thoreau criticism.

What, then, can be said for this book, which has evident values? For one thing, a collection of essays over a century inevitably reveals the rise and fall of Thoreau's reputation; and a chart of that has value. For another thing, two dozen essays by different writers reveal the variety of appeal Thoreau's books have had. These are values. And it is valuable to have Thoreau's reputation projected upon the backdrop of this cataclysmic

century of our history, for thus we can see why his appeal has grown so great. These are positive values, and the book makes these contributions. An editor must be himself; he cannot be all editors to all men. Thoreau would have understood that. And if an editor's book comes out on the positive side and makes a contribution, perhaps that is enough.

Raymond Adams

- The Same. Reviews: CHARLOTTESVILLE (Va.) DAILY PROGRESS, Dec. 14, 1954; DAILY CAVALIER (Charlottesville, Va.), Dec. 14, 1954; NEWARK (N.J.) EVENING NEWS, Dec. 30, 1954; OMAHA WORLD HERALD, Jan. 9, 1955; CHICAGO TRIBUNE, Jan. 30, 1955; DALLAS TIMES HERALD, Jan. 2, 1955.
- "Thoreau and the 'Seven Years' Itch." AMERICAN SPEECH, XXIX (Oct. 1954), 237. Points out that the citation of this phrase in WALDEN precedes the earliest DAE entry by forty years.
- Hattori, Tanosuke. "Thoreau on Life" in KOMYO O UTE (IN PURSUIT OF LIGHT). Tokyo: Ofukai Shuppan Bu, 1925. pp. 75-137.
- Haymaker, Richard E. FROM PAMPAS TO HEDGEROWS AND DOWNS: A STUDY OF W. H. HUDSON. New York: Bookman, 1954. Contains much on Hudson's interest in HDT.
- Hendrick, George. "Gandhiana at TxU." LIBRARY CHRONICLE OF THE UNIV. OF TEXAS, V (Fall, 1954), 43-7. Reprints for the first time some of Gandhi's comments on HDT.
- Jones, Joseph. "WALDEN and ULTIMA THULE: A Twin-Centennial." LIBRARY CHRONICLE OF THE UNIV. OF TEXAS, V (Fall, 1954), 13-22. Contrasts the philosophies of HDT and his English friend Thomas Cholmondeley.
- Keiper, Elizabeth. "Thoreau's Pen, A Century Ago, Wrote Truths for Today." ROCHESTER (N.Y.) TIMES UNION. July 16, 1954. A WALDEN centennial essay.
- Krutch, Joseph Wood. "THOREAU ON MADISON AVE." SAT. REVIEW, XXXVIII (Jan. 29, 1955), 9-10, 30-33. A delightful "interview" with HDT on modern advertising.
- Lalli, Biancamaria Tedeschini. HENRY DAVID THOREAU. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1954. 155pp. The first book-length study of HDT in Italian. Sorry, but we can't read a word of it so can't evaluate it.
- McKee, Christopher. "Thoreau: A Week on Mt. Washington and in Tuckerman Ravine." APPALACHIA, XXX (Dec. 1954), 169-183. A detailed study of HDT's 1858 mountain trip, correcting many errors of previous accounts. (Copies \$1.00, 5 Joy St, Boston, Mass.)
- NEW YORK TRIBUNE. "Life in the Woods". ? ?, 1849?. Reprinted in YOUTH'S COMPANION. July 19, 1849. Reprinted again in YOUTH'S COMPANION (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1954), p. 903. A hitherto unnoticed brief contemporary account of HDT's experiment at Walden.
- Nishikawa, Kojiro. THOREAU GENKO ROKU (MEMOIRS OF THOREAU). Tokyo: Naigai Suppan Kyokai, 1912. 124pp.
- Norman, Charles. TO A DIFFERENT DRUM. Reviews: CONCORD (Mass.) JOURNAL, Oct. 21, 1954; CHICAGO TRIBUNE, Nov. 14, 1954; APPALACHIA, XXX (Dec. 1954), 312-3.

Ord, Samuel. "Against Thoreau." NATION, Nov. 13, 1954. Replies to Lewis Leary's recent article on HDT, denouncing it. Leary replies here with another letter.

Owens, Olga. "Bookstall Gossip." BOSTON POST. Aug. 15, 1954. A WALDEN centennial essay.

ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH. "After 100 Years, 'Walden' Rejected." Aug. 15, 1954. A Walden centennial essay mourning the fact that HDT is not more widely heeded.

Sheean, Vincent. MAHATMA GANDHI. New York: Knopf, 1955. pp. 77-8, contains a rather garbled account of Gandhi's interest in HDT.

Sillen, Samuel. "Thoreau in our Time." LOOKING FORWARD, New York: INTERNATIONAL, 1955. pp. 153-163. Marxist approach to HDT.

Thomas, W. Stephen. "100th Anniversary of Thoreau's Walden: The Spiritual Message of Walden." Rochester, N.Y., First Unitarian Church, Oct. 3, 1954. 5pp. (mimeographed). A centennial sermon on WALDEN.

----- THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS (Ed. by Lunt). Reviews: NEW YORK WORLD TELEGRAM, Nov. 10, 1954; CONCORD (Mass.) JOURNAL, Oct. ?, 1954; CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER, Feb. 11, 1955; BOSTON POST, Dec. 26, 1954.

Thoreau, Henry David. "Higher Laws" in Dagobert D. Runes, ed. TREASURY OF PHILOSOPHY. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. pp. 1169-73. Excerpt from WALDEN with commentary.

----- "Planters of Trees." CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. Dec. 14, 1954. An excerpt from "The Succession of Forest Trees."

----- WALDEN OR LIFE IN THE WOODS. Tokyo (?): Sanseido, 1948. 108pp. Selections from WALDEN in English with introduction and notes in Japanese by T. Hijikata. In the Universal English Series.

----- "Words that Will Live." WORKER (New York), Dec. 14, 1954. Quotations from HDT in the Communist newspaper.

White, E.B. "Walden--A Century Later." DENVER POST. Oct. 17, 1954. Reprints the essay from the Autumn, 1954 YALE REVIEW.

I am indebted to the following for contributing information used in this bulletin: R. Adams, H. Adel, M. Ashfield, F. Babcock, T. Bailey, C. Bode, D. Caldwell, W. Conant, R. Cosbey, M. Chamberlain, L. Cushing, M. Doolittle, A. Fritz, G. Hendrick, C. Hoagland, W. Houston, J. Kennedy, E. Knowlton, N. Lehrman, A. Lownes, M. Sills, S. Thomas, A. Wesley, R. Wheeler, G. Wright.

The Thoreau Society, Inc., is an informal organization of students and followers of Henry David Thoreau. Its bulletins are published quarterly; its booklets, occasionally. Annual meetings are held in Concord, Mass. each July. Officers of the society are Raymond Adams (Chapel Hill, N. C.), president; Mrs. Caleb Wheeler (Concord, Mass.), vice-president; Walter Harding (Charlottesville, Va.), secretary-treasurer. Annual membership is one dollar; life-membership, \$25.00. Communications concerning membership or publications should be addressed to WALTER HARDING, 505 CABELL HALL, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA.